

JMSWCD Conservation Award Winners

The John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District hosted its annual Conservation Awards Luncheon on January 18, 2006 at The Inn at Vint Hill. Each year, the District recognizes individuals and organizations for outstanding conservation accomplishments. Award recipients for 2005 are:

Claire Mello, elementary science teacher at Highland School, was recipient of the 2005 Edwin F. Gulick Conservation Education Award. Mrs. Mello involves her students in a wide variety of conservation and natural resource activities, both in the classroom and in the field. Her students have studied and observed nature at numerous sites, including Camp Highroads, Learning Tree Farm, the Chesapeake Bay, Oak Shade Farm, and the Fauquier Outdoor Lab.

The Virginia Department of Forestry was recognized with the Conservation Partnership Award. Personnel from Forestry have assisted the Conservation District with educational programs, riparian buffer plantings, and with a stream clearing project to open up a section of Great Run to anadromous fish.

Roberta Jeffries, of Difficulty Farm, located near The Plains, was presented the Harry Jones Conservation Farmer award. Difficulty Farm has fenced over 9500 feet of streambank, established two hardened crossings and five water troughs, established two new wells, including one run by solar power, and dedicated 21 acres to riparian plantings.

Mack and Peggy Baer, owners of Baerback Farms in Orlean received the Clean Water Farm Award for the entire Rappahannock watershed, which encompasses 7 conservation districts. The Baers have implemented numerous conservation practices, including fencing to exclude livestock from all surface water on the farm. Over three miles of streambank were fenced as part of this practice, and a rotational grazing system established to help protect soil resources. In addition, over 50 acres of land were dedicated to conservation and woodland uses.



Claire Mello, science teacher at Highland School, Roberta Jeffries of Difficulty Farm, Peggy and Mack Baer of Baerback Farms, and Jonathan Pine, Virginia Department of Forestry, were recognized at the annual JMSWCD Awards Luncheon on January 18.